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SECTION I:

MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE CLERGY

Clergy Information Forms:

Because the basic life facts regarding the clergy are essential to the Bishop in his role as Chief Pastor, informational data forms on all clergy of the Diocese are maintained for the Bishop's files. All clergy are required to submit such data to the Bishop and to periodically update this information.

Letters Dimissory:

Transfer of canonical residency by Letters Dimissory should be requested to be sent to a new diocese by clergy who move there, immediately after taking up residence and being received by their new Bishop. Generally, we receive such letters under the same conditions. However, both the issuance and acceptance of Letters Dimissory may be delayed by the Bishop for cause.

License to Officiate:

A license to officiate in the Diocese may be requested from the Bishop by clergy living within this Diocese who are canonically resident in another Diocese, provided that they have first received a call to affiliate as an assistant priest at one of the congregations of the Diocese of Fort Worth. Such licenses are to be reviewed annually by the Bishop, and an annual activity report must be submitted to the Bishop by all licensed clergy prior to having their license renewed.

Physical Examinations and Clergy Wellness:

Clergy should practice good stewardship by setting the discipline of having thorough physical examinations on a regular basis. We who are accustomed to self-examination at frequent intervals and know the benefit for spiritual health must also care for the physical vehicle provided by God. In taking responsibility for their physical, spiritual and mental well being, all clergy are to take time to be with their spouse and children. All clergy are to take at least one full day off from work each week and an annual vacation.

Vacation Policy:

Clergy are entitled to one month's vacation for every calendar year's work and ministry. It is to be taken in consultation with the vestry (or Bishop's Committee in the case of Vicars of missions). Should a priest or deacon leave their cure before completing a calendar year, usually they can expect only part of the vacation in proportion to the time served.

Clergy Retreats and Conferences:

Clergy Retreats provide a necessary ingredient for the development of priestly spirituality, and an annual retreat for all clergy is considered mandatory by the Bishop. Clergy Conferences are of a different nature and provide opportunities for the Bishop and clergy to share vital concerns, develop mission and ministry plans and to enhance the quality of collegiality expected in the Christian community's leadership.

Expenses for retreats and conferences are to be shared by the priest or deacon and the congregation. Each congregation is encouraged to budget an annual amount for clergy continuing education and retreat expense. When necessary, financial assistance is available from the Bishop. At all Clergy Conferences and at the Mass of Collegiality during Holy Week, all active clergy are required to be in attendance, unless excused by the Bishop.

All clergy are encouraged to plan times for continuing education and to take sabbaticals when appropriate.

Curacies:

Diocesan Canon 24 covers the calling and the dismissal of assistant clergy and curates. The Bishop deems it a serious pastoral responsibility of his ministry to consult with the rector and vestry in this matter since the curate becomes a member of the diocesan family and is possibly eligible for a later move within the diocese. No priest or deacon is permitted to affiliate with a congregation of the Diocese as an assisting member of the clergy without the express permission of the Bishop.

Professional Ethics:

This category is related to the relationship of clergy with their colleagues living and working in a Christian community. There are Canons, which protect the rights and privileges of the incumbent rector/vicar. In addition to these "legal" rights, the exercise of common respect and courtesy require protecting the ministry of a successor, for instance, by being circumspect in visiting or returning to his former cure. Should a request be made by a parishioner to a former rector/vicar to perform a marriage, funeral, baptism, etc., permission must first be granted by the incumbent rector/vicar and such ministry is to be performed only at his invitation to do so. Such requests may become a difficult problem for the clergyman in relationship with a former parish. He will be loved and remembered, and he himself will have left behind close relationships. Former parishioners may well continue to call upon him for ministerial functions. But for the sake of his former parishioners and for the sake of the new rector/vicar, who is trying to establish his relationship with his people, the former rector/vicar must refrain if at all possible from accepting these requests. It is painful to make this kind of sacrifice, but ethically he is obliged to say NO and thus, further strengthen his successor's pastoral relationship and ministry. Good instruction of the laity before leaving a cure will serve to fortify this position.

Standards of Sexual Morality:

All members of the clergy of this Diocese, having subscribed to the Declaration required by Article VIII of the National Constitution, shall be under the obligation to model in their own lives the received teaching of the Church that all its members are to abstain from sexual relations outside of Holy Matrimony. The Bishop refuses to admit any clergy into this Diocese who will not subscribe to this standard.

All clergy functioning within this Diocese are required to receive training in the prevention of sexual harassment, adult sexual misconduct, and child sexual abuse and to be familiar with the Sexual Misconduct Policy of the Diocese. Copies are available from the Bishop’s Office.

Clergy and Divorce:

It is to be understood that when a member of the clergy is divorced under a cloud of scandal he or she must resign his or her cure and will not be able to continue to serve within the Diocese. He or she is not necessarily resigning from or renouncing the ministry and, in certain circumstances, may transfer and serve in another diocese. The Bishop will assist that person in seeking such a call, when appropriate.

Remarriage following divorce is not normally permitted for one who wishes to remain on active service in the Diocese of Fort Worth.

It is expected that when marital difficulties arise among the clergy, the Bishop will not be the last to know, but will have sufficient opportunity to work with and counsel the priest and spouse so that divorce will not be the only option.

Clergy Supply Policies and Procedures:

The Diocese, through the Canon to the Ordinary, maintains a list of clergy available for clergy supply. On request, this list will be sent to any parish, rector or vicar in need of a supply priest.

The recommended minimum remuneration is:

One principal Sunday Eucharist.....	\$125.00
Other Sunday Eucharists (each).....	\$75.00
Weekday Eucharist (each).....	\$75.00

Mileage is to be reimbursed at the standard rate per mile under current IRS rules.

Interim Clergy:

When there is a vacancy in any parish of the Diocese, the Bishop will assist the vestry in engaging the services of interim clergy, to serve until such time as a new rector is called. An interim priest-in-charge will serve with the understanding that he is not eligible for consideration as the new rector.

The Dress of the Clergy:

Clergy must be ever mindful that their personal appearance while in the performance of official duties in public is not only a reflection upon themselves, but also upon their parishes, the Diocese and the Episcopal Church. Appropriate clerical attire, clean and pressed, shoes shined, etc. is expected of all clergy of the Diocese at all times, sports and leisure time excepted. The Bishop encourages the “black suit, black shirt standard” as the norm for all diocesan priests and discourages the wearing of loud colors or flashy attire with clericals.

The cassock is the ordinary dress of the clergy while in the church.

(1) **Non-Eucharistic Vesture:**

The surplice or cotta is the ordinary dress, worn over the cassock, for all services and ministrations, except when Eucharistic vestments are worn.

The stole (outside Mass) is never worn over the surplice as a mere decoration; it is worn when some occasion requires it. The stole is, therefore, worn over the surplice or cotta:

At Baptisms and Weddings (white)
While hearing confessions and when giving Unction (purple);
By the priests who assist the Bishop in laying on of hands in the ordination of priests (white or red, as designated by the Bishop);
In administering Communion from the Reserved Sacrament to the sick (white);
When conducting a funeral (purple or white).
When local custom is observed at certain services, such as the Stations of the Cross.

(2) **The Eucharistic Vestments:**

When Eucharistic vestments are worn in this Diocese for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, the following is strongly advised:

The priest who is to celebrate Mass is encouraged to wear the cassock, over which is worn the amice, alb, girdle, maniple, stole, and chasuble. The cassock/alb may be substituted for the cassock and alb.

The deacon wears cassock, amice, alb (cassock/alb), stole (over left shoulder), dalmatic and maniple.

The sub-deacon wears cassock, amice, alb (cassock/alb), girdle, and tunicle.

At a Low Mass, the celebrant is to wear the same vestments, but assisting clergy are to wear cassock, surplice, and stole, if they are to assist in the administration of the Sacraments. An acceptable alternative for assisting clergy would be to wear a cassock/alb and stole.

SECTION II:

MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE LAITY

Acolytes:

Activities of acolytes are to be handled by the Parishes and Missions. Proper training and instruction of all acolytes are the responsibility of the rector or vicar.

Admission of Children to Holy Communion:

Admission to Communion is given in the sacrament of Baptism. Guidelines set forth in the 1988 House of Bishops resolution should be followed in communicating those baptized as infants:

“Resolved, that the mind of the House of Bishops is that: Those baptized in infancy may, as full members of the Body of Christ, begin receiving communion at any time they desire and their parents permit; and that the following pastoral principles are recommended to guide the Church in communicating those baptized as infants:

1. That the reception of communion by young children should normally be in the context of their participation with their parents and other family in the liturgy of the Church;
2. That instruction is required for adults and older children before their baptism and first communion; instruction is also essential for young children after they are baptized and have received communion in infancy, that they may grow in appreciation of the grace they have received and in their ability to respond in faith, love, and thankful commitment of their lives to God;
3. That pastoral sensitivity is always required: in not forcing the sacrament on an unwilling child, in not rejecting a baptized child who is reaching out for communion with God in Christ, and in respecting the position of the parents in this regard; and
4. That the practice of some parishes which customarily give first communion to infants at their baptism, then next offer them communion when they and their parents express a desire that they receive, is seen to be acceptable practice in the spirit of these guidelines.

Clergy who desire to provide First Communion classes for children should consider five year olds as the appropriate age group for such instruction.

Alcoholic Beverages:

It is the policy of the Bishop that no congregation will engage in the sale of alcoholic beverages or mixed drinks at any function of the congregation or any of its organizations. The sale of any alcoholic beverage or mixed drinks is also contrary to the laws of the State of Texas without proper license.

The serving of alcoholic beverages (without charge) at wedding receptions, suppers, picnics, etc., either on or off the church property, is left to the discretion of the priest and the vestry. Where alcoholic beverages are served, alternative drinks (non-alcoholic) must be provided and attractively displayed for those who desire them.

Communicant:

1. Communicant In Good Standing

A baptized person who has been confirmed or received by a Bishop of this Church and who receives Holy Communion on a regular basis in the Episcopal Church is a communicant of this Church. All communicants whose names are duly recorded in the Parish Register where they are attending, who for the previous year have been faithful in corporate worship, unless for good cause prevented, and have been faithful in working, praying, and giving for the spread of the Kingdom of God, are to be considered Communicants in Good Standing.

2. Lapsed Communicants

It is both appropriate and necessary to expect lapsed communicants and those who have changed church affiliations and are seeking readmittance to the Episcopal Church to be received back into communion with the Bishop following a regular attendance at an Inquirer's Class.

Funerals:

The priest is in charge, not only of the funeral service, but also of the decoration of the church and the choice of music. Due consideration to the desires of the bereaved should be given in a pastoral, sensitive way. Funerals for communicant members of the Church are normally celebrated in the context of the Requiem Mass, during which all communicants are to be given opportunity to receive the Blessed Sacrament during the Communion of the people. Homilies by the clergy are appropriate at funerals in the church, but eulogies are inappropriate and are to be discouraged.

Gambling:

It is the Bishop's policy to allow congregations or organizations within a congregation to host, sponsor, or participate in raffles and games of chance (i.e., Bingo) provided they are conducted with discretion and have no connection with an outside commercial organization. He does not condone parishes, missions, or other agencies of the Diocese going into the gambling business (sponsoring Bingo halls, etc.).

Guest Communion:

1. Technically speaking, the Episcopal Church does not practice what is called "Open Communion," i.e., that any baptized person is invited to receive Holy Communion when visiting an Episcopal Church. More accurately stated, our policy is that any baptized person who is a communicant in good standing in his or her own Church may receive the Sacrament in our Church if that person feels the spiritual need to do so, is repentant of their sins, and approaches the Holy Communion as an expression of the Real Presence of Jesus Christ.
2. We do not publicly announce that everyone may come to the altar for Communion. Neither do we turn away from Communion anyone who presents himself or herself at the Communion rail.
3. The habitual reception of the Sacrament by persons who are not affiliated with the Episcopal Church is an indication for a pastoral invitation to Confirmation or Reception.
4. If a printed bulletin announcement is desired, the following words are recommended by the Bishop:

"All visitors who have been baptized with water, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and who have been admitted to Communion in their own church, are welcome to share the Holy Eucharist. We are all called to repent of our sins and to approach the Holy Communion as an expression of the Real Presence of Jesus Christ. Many visitors who desire on this occasion to receive Communion in the Episcopal Church find in it the means to strengthen their life within the Christian family and their participation in the church to which they belong, as we pray and work that God's Church may be one."

OR

"All persons who have been baptized with water in the Name of the Holy Trinity, have been admitted to Holy Communion in their own church, and accept the teachings on the Holy Eucharist on pages 859-860 of the *Book of Common Prayer* are welcome to receive Holy Communion with us."

Intinction:

Intinction as a normal practice is not sanctioned within this Diocese. Clergy are requested to instruct Eucharistic Ministers that if a communicant insists on intinction, the Eucharistic Minister shall take the Host, dip it in the chalice and place it on the communicant's tongue. Intinction is viewed as a mode of communication to be used in cases of communicable diseases, infirmity, etc. Ancient custom and Scripture would indicate reception in both kinds as normative.

Licensed Lay Ministries:

A confirmed adult communicant in good standing may serve as a Worship Leader, Lay Preacher, Eucharistic Minister, Eucharistic Visitor, or Catechist if licensed by the Bishop. Guidelines for training and selection of such persons are contained in the Diocesan Manual for Lay Readers and Lay Eucharistic Ministers, copies of which may be obtained from the Diocesan Center for Ministry.

The Bishop will issue a license only at the request, and upon the recommendation, of the rector or vicar of the congregation in which the person will be serving. The license shall be issued for a period of time not to exceed three years and shall be revocable by the Bishop, or upon request of the rector or vicar in charge of the congregation.

- A. A Licensed Worship Leader is a person who regularly leads public worship in a congregation under the direction of a member of the clergy. A Worship Leader may give the sermon, provided that sermons published for Worship Leaders or sermons provided by an ordained priest canonically resident in the Diocese of Fort Worth are used.
- B. A Lector is a person who reads the lessons and leads the Prayers of the People. This ministry does not require a Diocesan license. They should, however, be commissioned for this ministry by the congregation in which they function.
- C. A Lay Preacher is a person who preaches sermons of his or her own creation on occasions of public worship. Both training and examination by a Diocesan training team will be required before such a license is granted.
- D. A Eucharistic Minister is licensed to administer the chalice at services where there are not a sufficient number of priests and deacons present to do so. When there are enough vested clergy in the service, the clergy will administer the chalice regardless of how many Eucharistic Ministers are licensed in the congregation.
- E. A Eucharistic Visitor is licensed to take the consecrated sacrament from the Holy Eucharist on Sunday to members of the congregation who, by reason of illness or infirmity, are unable to be present at the Celebration. Rectors who wish to use this ministry must carefully train such Visitors and strictly adhere

to the provisions of the *Book of Occasional Services*, concerning this ministry.

- F. A Catechist is a licensed lay person who participates in the preparation of candidates for Baptism, Confirmation, Reception, and Reaffirmation.

Application forms for licensed lay ministries are found at the end of this Customary.

Prayer Book Policy:

The Book of Common Prayer, 1979, is the Prayer Book of the Diocese of Fort Worth. *The Book of Common Prayer 1928* may be used by Parishes and Missions provided that the permission of the Bishop is first obtained.

The Anglican Service Book is not intended to replace the Prayer Book in the pew of any congregation. Texts from it may be used for services rendered only in contemporary language in the Prayer Book, but are to follow the rubrics of the Prayer Book in all instances.

The Lectionary and Calendar of the Church Year approved by General Convention will be followed in all congregations in this Diocese.

SECTION III:

SACRAMENTS

Baptism:

Except in emergencies, the Sacrament of Holy Baptism should be administered within the Eucharist as the chief service on a Sunday or other major feast day. "Holy Baptism is especially appropriate at the Easter Vigil, on the Day of Pentecost, on All Saints' Day or the Sunday after All Saints' Day, and on the Feast of Baptism of our Lord (the First Sunday after the Epiphany). It is recommended that, as far as possible, Baptisms be reserved for these occasions or when a bishop is present." (Book of Common Prayer, page 312)

Each person to be baptized is to be sponsored by one or more baptized persons, who are themselves practicing Christian believers who are active members of the Church. It is the required duty of the clergy to provide adequate pre-baptismal instruction to all sponsors, parents, and mature candidates.

In the baptism of infants and children, it is the Bishop's expectation that at least one of the parents will be an active communicant member of the congregation where the baptism is to take place. In pastoral situations where this is not the case, the priest is to consult with the rector of the parish where the family belongs prior to proceeding. Active participation in the life of the Christian community is expected of all parties involved, both before and after the baptism.

Confirmation:

Confirmation is a significant event in the spiritual life of one making a public reaffirmation of his or her baptismal vows. It is a time of empowerment and commissioning, when one receives the apostolic laying-on-of-hands and anointing with chrism. Candidates for confirmation must be properly instructed in the Christian faith and life, repentant of their sins, and duly prepared to make a mature, public commitment to following Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

Though the minimum age for youth confirmations may vary somewhat for certain pastoral situations, the normative age for young people to be presented for confirmation in this Diocese is thirteen or older. The Bishop discourages confirmation for those who are younger than this.

Persons already confirmed by a bishop in the apostolic succession, but not in the Anglican Communion, may be received by the Bishop, following the appropriate instruction and preparation. Any member of the Episcopal Church who has lapsed from active participation in the life of the Church, or who for some other appropriate reason wishes to do so, may make a public re-affirmation in the presence of the Bishop at the time of his visitation.

Confirmation, Reception and Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows are three different, distinct categories of persons to be presented to the Bishop at the time of his annual visitation. In this Diocese, we continue to use the three different categories as traditionally understood in the practice of classical Anglicanism. Confirmation is for those who have been baptized, but have never received the laying on of hands by a Bishop in apostolic succession. Reception is for those who have been baptized and confirmed in another church of the apostolic succession, (the Roman Catholic or Orthodox churches), and now wish to be received into the Episcopal Church/Anglican Communion.

Reaffirmation is for Episcopalians who wish to reaffirm their vows previously made at baptism and confirmation. At confirmation, the traditional laying on of hands by this Bishop is used. At reception and reaffirmation, it is not; a blessing is given instead. Only those confirmed or received are to be entered into your parish register in the "Confirmation" section. Please make these distinctions clear as you present your candidates to the bishop. He prefers to use the second formula for confirmation, and you will notice that the words are different for reception and for reaffirmation.

Local clergy should take care to provide a fresh lemon wedge and a slice of white bread for the Bishop to use in removing the oils from his thumb immediately after the confirmations.

Marriage:

The priest is in charge, not only of the marriage service, but also of the decoration of the church and the choice of music. No wedding date may be set without consultation and approval by the priest in charge. Marriages are expected to be celebrated in the church as a service of worship and not as private affairs or social spectacles. No marriage is to be celebrated during Advent or Lent, except for special or unusual reasons. In such cases, it is customary to consult with the Bishop before proceeding. The clergy are required to provide careful preparation and instruction to the couple prior to the solemnization of any marriage. For this reason, the officiating priest must be contacted at least sixty days prior to the anticipated date of the proposed wedding.

Every congregation is expected to have clear and precise policies regarding marriages and the use of the Parish Hall for receptions. Matters to be addressed include the use of flowers, candles, photographers, videos, music, rehearsals, fees, etc.

It is the practice of this Christian community to celebrate all services of Holy Matrimony within the normal place of worship, the parish church building. Marriage is a Sacrament celebrated by, for and with the Christian community. Any other practice such as garden weddings, or on bridal paths, at lakeside, in airplanes, while skydiving, etc., are to be discouraged as inappropriate. Marriages of communicant members of the Church are normally celebrated in the context of the Nuptial Mass, during which all communicants are to be given opportunity to receive the Blessed Sacrament during the Communion of the people.

Marriage Annulments:

If for pastoral reasons an ecclesiastical annulment is requested, evidence must be submitted based on Canon I. 19, Section 2(a) of the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church. In requesting an annulment, the application form provided by the Bishop's office is to be accompanied by the following:

1. A letter from the petitioner explaining the grounds for a judgment of the nullity of this marriage.
2. A letter from the priest of the congregation where the petitioner is a member, stating his assessment of the basis for an annulment to be granted.
3. Written statements from a minimum of two witnesses, supporting the application, based on

their personal knowledge of the marriage in question.

Marriage In The Church of Divorced Persons:

A petition to the Bishop is necessary when either or both parties have been previously married and when the former spouse is still living. The Church is not a business for marrying people, and only those who are part of the Christian community or those who are seeking to become part of it are to be considered. One of the parties must be baptized and should ordinarily be a member of the parish where the wedding is to take place.

A petition is something that seeks a decision. Therefore, certain information is necessary on which to base that decision. The pastoral relationship established between the priest and those coming to him seeking permission to marry in the Church is essential. The findings of the priest are the most important parts of the petition upon which the decision is based. Therefore, thorough counseling and teaching are expected.

The information presented to the Bishop, along with the completed form of petition which is provided by the Bishop's office, must include:

1. A letter from the divorced person(s) indicating what went wrong in the previous marriage, whether counseling was sought, what positive insights or understandings were gained from the experience, why it is believed that the proposed marriage will be successful, what moral and financial responsibilities continue with respect to the former spouse and any children of that marriage, and the reason(s) the person wishes to be married in the Church.
2. A letter from the priest indicating his opinion in the matter and his willingness to officiate at the marriage.

A petition for remarriage of a person who has already been twice married before will not be considered by the Bishop unless the priest can present data which indicates that there were specific impediments to one or both of the previous marriages. These impediments are consanguinity or affinity; mistaken identity; sufficient mental deficiency; failure to have reached the age of puberty; undisclosed impotence, sexual perversion, or venereal disease; bigamy; concurrent contract inconsistent with the marital contract; or fraud, coercion, duress, or personality defects which make competent and free consent impossible.

Communicants of one Diocese who wish to be remarried by a priest in another Diocese must first secure the consent of the Bishop of the Diocese in which they are canonically resident, and then have it endorsed by the Bishop of the Diocese in which they wish to be married.

The Bishop will receive petitions for permission to bless marriages of those married outside the canonical provisions of the Church. A letter, summarizing the circumstances of the marriage, and stating that the couple has been instructed in the Church's teaching on marriage, is necessary. The priest involved with them shall determine the time within these limits. During this period, the couple is expected to show their sincerity of commitment by regular attendance at services of worship, financial support of the Church, prayer, and involvement in the life of the congregation.

Letters assuring communicants of their continued good standing are available if requested, when they

are not requesting permission to be married. Such a letter does not carry permission to be married in the Church at some future date. A petition must always be submitted to the Bishop whenever a divorced person, whose former spouse is still living, desires to be married in the Church.

In all requests for the Bishop's consent to the marriage of divorced persons, applications must be in the hands of the Bishop at least 60 days before the marriage is contemplated, and no announcement of the marriage may be made until the consent of the Bishop has been received. Such applications will normally be considered by the Bishop only when the divorce has been final for at least one year.

The Blessing of a Civil Marriage by a priest of the Church requires the same consent from the Bishop and must meet the same criteria of Canon I.19, if there is a previous divorce with the previous spouse still living.

The Reserved Sacrament:

The Blessed Sacrament is to be reverently reserved (generally in one kind) in a tabernacle or aumbry in the church. This reservation is indicated by a Presence Lamp (or Sanctuary Lamp), which is kept burning at all times. This lamp is preferably of clear, uncolored glass (not red), and the sanctuary candle is to be white.

The Blessed Sacrament in reserve is to be replenished on a regular basis. Only ordained persons are to lock or unlock the tabernacle (or aumbry) and remove the Sacrament from or replace it in the tabernacle.

SECTION IV:

GUIDELINES ON THE DIACONATE

The Book of Common Prayer describes the work of a Deacon as "a special ministry of servanthood" directly under the Bishop. As such, the life and ministry of a Deacon goes far beyond liturgical functions and Sunday morning activities. It is an active ministry in the world, seeking to serve all people, "particularly the poor, the weak, the sick, and the lonely." (BCP, pg. 543)

The following guidelines are offered by the Bishop and the Commission on Ministry to assist in the discernment of vocations to the Diaconate in this Diocese. All aspirants should familiarize themselves with these guidelines prior to applying to enter into the ordination process and must thoroughly discuss them in advance with the priest who is to sponsor their application.

The academic course of study in preparation for ordination as a Deacon will be a combination of a program at The Anglican School of Theology in Dallas and a series of seminars offered here in the Diocese.

The process begins by attending the Bishop's Conference on Vocations to the Diaconate,

GUIDELINES

1. Deacons are non-stipendiary ministers. They do not receive a stipend without the express permission of the Bishop. Wages, salary, or housing allowances are not to be expected. The reimbursable expenses related to the performance of their duties should be described in the individual contracts negotiated with the rector or institution to which they are assigned.
2. Deacons wear ordinary street clothes. They do not wear clerical attire without the permission of the Bishop. They should wear the Deacon's lapel pin or the Deacon's cross as a rule. If clerical attire is required, the Deacon should request permission from the Bishop by specifying the times, locations, and ministries to be performed as well as the reason for the request.
3. Deacons serve as the rubrics of *The Book of Common Prayer* direct in the liturgical services of the Church. A priest should never perform the liturgical ministries of a Deacon when a Deacon is present. Deacons do not officiate at public services of Communion from the Reserved Sacrament (so called Deacon's Masses) without the written permission of the Bishop.
4. Deacons are assigned and re-assigned at the will of the Bishop as stated in Title III, Canon 7, Sec. 4 of the Canons of the Episcopal Church. Accordingly, no Deacon may be "called" by a rector, vicar or parish to serve as a curate or interim clergy. Each assignment should be reviewed annually by the Deacon, the parish or institution, and the Bishop.
5. Deacons should have seat and voice at all meetings of the vestry, and they shall make a report to the Annual Parish Meeting regarding the "needs, concerns, and hopes of the world."
6. Deacons should have a written contract in force for one year and reviewed each year. This contract should be renegotiated with the Deacon, the Bishop and the parish or institution to

which the Deacon is assigned. This contract should specify the duties, hours, and expenses eligible for reimbursement as well as covering other areas that may be unique to the specific Deacon's ministry. Those supervising the work of Deacons shall always be aware that such ministry is voluntary. Therefore, the hours expected must not be more than 10-20 hours per week and must always leave room for occupation and family responsibilities.

7. The Deacon preaches at the discretion of the rector or vicar of the parish to which the Deacon is assigned. The content of such sermons should be concerned with ministry in the diaconal context.
8. Deacons are entitled to seat and voice, but not vote in the Annual Convention of the Diocese. A report from the Diaconate to the Diocese shall be presented at each Convention.
9. Deacons are expected to attend periodic conferences as required by the Bishop and should engage themselves in regular study as a way of improving and reflecting upon their individual ministries.
10. Aspirants for the Diaconate should not assume that following ordination they will be assigned to their home parish to serve as a Deacon.
11. When there is a change of Rectors, the parish Deacon will normally be reassigned by the Bishop to another congregation.

SECTION V:

PARISH AND MISSION POLICIES

VESTRIES:

Each year in the parishes of the Diocese, a number of vestry members are elected at the annual parish meeting. These men and women are chosen by members of the congregation to act as their representatives in the parish's relations with its clergy and the management of its corporate property. The vestry is thus, in an important sense, the management team of the parish.

The Canons of the Church regulating the duties of the wardens and vestry of a parish are simple and meager. This is advantageous in that latitude is given to meet varied circumstances and conditions and disadvantageous in that there are practically no instructions to give guidance and authority.

It is vital to remember that the vestry acts as a "council of advice" to the rector. As such, the rector and vestry form a TEAM MINISTRY. Members of the vestry should also be fully aware that they are part of the Diocese and that what they do or fail to do, affects the life and work of the Diocese and is lifting up or lowering the morale and effectiveness of the work of the general Church.

Many parishes are heavily colored by "congregationalism" which is totally contrary to our polity in the Episcopal Church. The rector and vestry of a parish must work together as a team, and a spirit of mutual recognition and appreciation should be far more visible and articulate than it often is.

These guidelines are presented in the hope that vestry elections and service may be all that they should be in the parishes of the Diocese to the advancement of the Body of Christ.

The principal purpose of the parish's annual meeting, as defined by Canon Law, is to elect vestry members to replace those whose terms have just expired. But with careful planning, it can also become a major occasion in the parish year for rallying morale, analyzing the progress of the past twelve months, and concentrating on your goals for the immediate future.

In most parishes, the rector usually appoints the outgoing members of the vestry to serve as a nominating committee. It is their duty to present nominees who will bring additional know-how to the vestry, so that its membership will reflect a broad spectrum of expertise ranging from the legal and fiscal to such fields as communications, teaching, social work, etc.

Many nominating committees prepare a slate of more names than there are positions to be filled to offer a choice to the parishioners and to forestall any embarrassment among the losers. A person's commitment to the parish is utmost in determining his/her willingness to service.

It is foolhardy to expect that being elected a member of the vestry will necessarily activate what has been a nominal churchman. Likewise, it stands to reason that any nominee not personally convinced and practicing Christian stewardship can hardly be expected to bring a concern for stewardship and fiscal needs of the parish if elected.

In some parishes, it is customary to supplement the nominating committee's list by making nominations from the floor of the meeting. Others provide that this be done in advance, by petition with a prescribed number of signatures. Whatever procedure is followed, you will want to be sure that all candidates know what election to the vestry will mean in terms of their time, energy, and imagination.

Although many priests are reluctant to do so, it is quite within the rights of the local clergyman to make suggestions to the nominating committee and most especially to express his previous relations with the nominees, and possible difficulties or problems which could be encountered if they were elected to vestry membership.

BASIC CRITERIA FOR VESTRY NOMINATION ARE THE FOLLOWING:

1. Does the nominee meet or exceed the canonical requirements of Communicant status in this Church?
2. Is the nominee a consistent, concerned steward? Does he/she make a pledge each year and pay that pledge?
3. Does the basic lifestyle of the nominee conform to Christian expectations and is it consistent with his/her evaluation by the community and parish?
4. What lay ministry have they performed?
5. Is the nominee hopeful about the life of the parish, the Christian faith, and life in general?
6. Can the rector work with the nominee?

This information should quite properly be published for each nominee at the parish meeting or before and in that way a more intelligent selection could be made by the voting constituency.

Vestry election is one of the more important tasks accomplished by the parish, therefore the following have been written for the parish's guidance:

NATIONAL CANONS: Title I, Canon 14, Section 1, 2, and 3.

DIOCESAN CANONS: Canon 25, Section 1-10, "Wardens and Vestry of Parishes"

1. **VESTRY OFFICERS:**

The wardens are designated as senior or junior, although sometimes called the "Rector's Warden" and the "People's Warden." At any rate, the duties are usually assigned on the theory that the ultimate responsibility is with the senior warden who is closest to the rector. The junior warden is most often given the special responsibility of the care of the property and is expected to represent the interests of the people of the parish.

NOTE: The position of warden should never be allowed to become an "honorary office"; it is too important for that. One of the handicaps of church work is that it is voluntary; this means that we too often allow the perpetuation of conditions which would not be allowed in business. To be a member of the nominating committee of a vestry is to hold a very responsible position. In most parishes this group determines the caliber and character of the vestry over the years. By taking pains to secure the very best persons available, they can make a vestry a board on which it is a signal honor to serve.

2. **AUDIT, BONDING, ETC.:** (See Diocesan Canon 29):

Each vestry is responsible for the fiscal affairs of the congregation. It is the requirement of the Diocese of Fort Worth and the Canons of the Episcopal Church that there be an annual audit of the church's financial records. This audit may be done by a professional audit firm, by a CPA, or by an audit review committee appointed by the vestry and using the "Financial Guide" provided by the Diocese. Copies are available from the Diocesan Center.

Every treasurer handling money in the name of the church or any of its organizations is covered under a Diocesan blanket bond up to an amount of \$50,000.00. It is not necessary for a congregation to acquire additional bond coverage except where there is a desire to supplement the amount of the Diocesan bond.

3. **PAROCHIAL REPORTS:**

Each rector and vestry is expected to comply with the requirements of the National Church in preparing and submitting annual Parochial Reports on schedule. The report for the preceding year is due in the Diocesan Center **NO LATER THAN MARCH 31ST** of the succeeding year. In addition, the clergy and vestry have the responsibility of supplying any information requested by the Diocesan Center.

4. **CONVENTION DELEGATES:**

Delegates and Alternate Delegates to the annual conventions of the Diocese of Fort Worth are elected at the annual parish meeting of the congregation and serve until their successors are elected. The annual meeting of each parish shall be held no later than the 31st of January. Delegates and Alternate Delegates must be communicants in good standing of the parish they are to represent and at least 18 years of age. The number of delegates to be elected is determined on the basis of the size of the congregation as determined by Canon 1 of the Diocese of Fort Worth. If a Delegate cannot serve and no elected Alternate Delegate is available, the rector may certify another person to serve in place of the elected delegate.

BISHOP'S COMMITTEE:

A "Bishop's Committee" shall be formed in each mission of the Diocese to oversee the temporal concerns of the mission.

Members of the Bishop's Committee are elected to the committee in the same manner as that of members of the vestry of a parish. However, they serve at the pleasure of the Bishop, who appoints the wardens of the committee upon recommendation of the vicar.

The Bishop's Committee functions in the same capacity as a vestry of a parish, guided by the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese pertaining to Vestries and Bishop's Committees.

When a mission attains parish status, the congregation of the new parish elects a vestry as prescribed in the Canons of the Diocese. When that vestry is in place, the Bishop's Committee is dissolved.

SECTION VI:

DIOCESAN POLICY

EPISCOPAL VISITATIONS:

Title III, Canon 18, Section 4(a). Every Bishop shall visit the congregations within his jurisdiction at least once in three years, for purposes of examining their condition, inspecting the behavior of the clergy, administering Confirmation, preaching the Word, and at his discretion, celebrating the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. At every visitation it shall be the duty of the Bishop to examine the records required by Title III, Canon 18, Section 4(b).

Title III, Canon 9, Section 5(c). At every visitation it shall be the duty of the minister, and of the church wardens or vestry, or of some other officer, to exhibit to the Bishop the Parish Register and to give information to him of the state of the congregation, spiritual and temporal, under such heads as shall have been previously signified to them in writing, by the Bishop. He will want to review the register of all burials, baptisms, and marriages which have taken place since his last visitation and to be given a copy of the most recent financial report of the congregation.

During a visitation of the Bishop, the services are under his direction. The liturgical color and Propers of the day are to be used, whether or not there are to be confirmations. A special offering is to be received at all services for the Bishop's Discretionary Fund on the day of his visitation.

Normally, the Bishop's visitation schedule is established at least nine months to a year in advance. This requires for the clergy to make known any special requests or local needs far in advance, (i.e. anniversaries, special celebrations, etc.), by calling or writing the Administrative Assistant to the Bishop.

“WHEN THERE IS A VACANCY”

Whenever a Rector resigns or retires and a Parish is left vacant in the Diocese of Fort Worth, the following steps are to be taken:

1. **NOTIFICATION OF VACANCY:** The Senior Warden is to notify the Bishop in writing that the Parish is vacant. The Bishop appreciates a telephone call as well.
2. **SPECIAL VESTRY MEETING:** The Bishop will call a meeting of the Vestry in which either he or the Canon to the Ordinary will present a comprehensive search process which will lead to the calling of a new priest. A brief description of the search process is outlined below.
3. **FORMATION OF A SEARCH COMMITTEE BY THE VESTRY:** It is expected that the Vestry serve as the Search Committee. Ordinarily, the Search Committee is the Vestry plus additional parishioners who possess abilities and skills that will help the Search Committee with its task. (Note: at the end of this process when the Vestry elects the new Rector, those who have served on the Search Committee who are not members of the Vestry will not be allowed a vote.) The Vestry alone is authorized to make the final decision (in consultation with the Bishop) and to issue the call.

SEARCH – PHASE I

4. **PARISH SELF EVALUATION:** The Vestry/Search Committee in consultation with the Bishop's office will conduct a congregational study to determine the needs, desires, expectations, wishes, vision and call of the Parish in order to be able to determine the kind of priest that is needed. This comprehensive study will result in what is called a **Parish Profile** and will include such things as the history of the Parish, the ministry that goes on both inside the congregation and outside in the community. It will thoroughly describe what congregational life is like. This **Parish Profile** can and should be used long after a new Rector is chosen as a handout to new individuals and families. **The study and profile must be completed before names of potential candidates for the position of Rector are gathered.**

SEARCH – PHASE II

5. Parishes will receive names of potential candidates from two sources:
 - a. The congregation members may be asked to suggest names to the Search Committee. These names will be forwarded to the Bishop's office.
 - b. The Bishop will review the Parish Profile and appropriately advertise the vacancy among the clergy of the Diocese and among his connections throughout the Church. He will select and finalize a list of candidates that he believes are the most qualified and present that list to the Vestry/Search Committee.
6. **Contacting the Candidates:** The Vestry/Search Committee will send a letter of first contact with the **Parish Profile** and a request for personal resumes of each candidate. This letter will formally ask if they are interested in the position.
7. **Selection of a Short List of candidates:** Once resumes are received, additional conversations may take place by telephone (conference calls) and/ or written questions which will enable the Vestry/Search Committee to form a short list of two or three candidates.
8. **Interviewing the candidates:** Once the short list is selected, the Vestry/Search Committee will begin interviewing in the following manner:
 - a. Members of the Vestry/Search Committee may make a visit to the Parish where the candidate is Rector. This is done only with his permission. Once these visits are completed the Vestry/Search Committee will discuss these visits.
 - b. The Vestry/Search Committee will bring each candidate and his wife for a visit and interview. Each candidate should be given at least two days in which they will be given the opportunity to Celebrate the Eucharist and preach (this is a private service for Vestry/Search Committee members only.) In addition, a formal interview will take place in which the Vestry/Search Committee presents its questions that have been carefully formulated based on the Parish self study data. This interview should provide a substantial opportunity for the Vestry/Search Committee and the candidate to determine if a healthy match is possible. During these two days, a social/fellowship activity should take place in which the Vestry/Search committee and

candidate get to know each other. The candidate and spouse should also be given the opportunity to see the community. If the candidate is not a priest of the Diocese of Fort Worth, the Bishop expects to interview the candidate in his office sometime during the two-day visit.

9. **Issuing the call:** It is **MANDATORY** that a background check is done prior to issuing the call. Upon completion of all interviews the Vestry/Search Committee will meet to discuss each candidate thoroughly. The Bishop is then notified if the **Vestry** is ready to elect. Upon permission granted, the Vestry proceeds to elect the new Rector and a call is issued. This should be done immediately by telephone and followed up with a formal call letter which stipulates the following:

- a. Starting date
- b. Moving arrangements and conditions
- c. Financial package
- d. Vacation terms (one month per year)
- e. Expectations of ministry
- f. Continuing education and sabbatical

10. **Wrap-up Activities:** Once a call is accepted, the Senior Warden notifies the Bishop. A date should be negotiated with the Bishop regarding the service of Institution for the new Rector. All candidates who were not elected must be notified by the Senior Warden and thanked for allowing themselves to be considered.

DEANS AND DEANERIES:

The Diocese is divided into geographical groupings of congregations called Deaneries. The purpose of the Deanery is to enable clergy and laity to share common interests and concerns and to work together with more strength than is sometimes available to single congregations. The Bishop appoints the Dean of each Deanery who serves at the Bishop's pleasure. Deans are members of the Executive Council with voice but no vote. Activities on the Deanery level include meetings of the Clericus, the Deanery Council, and the Church Women.

MISSIONS:

Missions within the Diocese of Fort Worth are the responsibility of the Bishop and are part of his apostolic office and of the Diocese of which he is the constitutional head. Canon 21 of the Diocese states that "the power to establish a mission is hereby vested in the Bishop of the Diocese." It also gives him sole authority to appoint clergy and lay persons to serve in the missions of the Diocese. Bishop's Committees of Missions will have the same duties as Vestries of Parishes.

Canon 10 of the Diocese has also provided for an Executive Council of which the Bishop is the president, to administer the missionary work of the Diocese through the Department of Mission. The basic policy of the Missions Department is to assist the Bishop in the administration of all mission congregations and to aid him in the establishment of new missions.

COMMISSION ON CHURCH ARCHITECTURE & APPLIED ARTS:

This commission is composed of people skilled in church architecture and ecclesiastical art. Any parish or mission considering building plans is required by Canon 14 to obtain the approval of this Commission before erecting, adding to, or making changes in any church building, parish house, or rectory.

TITLE TO PROPERTY:

Article 14 of the Constitution of the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth provides as follows:

"The Title of all real estate acquired for the use of the Church in this Diocese, including the real property of all parishes and missions, as well as Diocesan Institutions, shall be held subject to control of the Church in the Diocese of Fort Worth acting by and through a corporation known as the "Corporation of the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth."

Forms for the sale or purchase of property, and for church, loans. are to be obtained from the Diocesan Finance Department. Such transactions must be approved by the Finance Committee, the Standing Committee and the Board of Trustees of the Corporation of the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth.

SECTION VII:

DEPARTMENTS AND COMMISSIONS

MISSION DEPARTMENT:

Mission Policy: The mission policy for the Diocese is determined by the Bishop and the Mission Department and approved by the Executive Council. The Mission Strategy and Development Committee, consisting of clergy and lay members, is appointed by the Bishop and is responsible for establishing new congregations, as well as assisting in the growth and support of existing mission churches. The Canon to the Ordinary serves as Executive Officer for the Department.

Diocesan Curacy Program: All newly ordained transitional deacons and priests working full-time in parish ministry and related fields are under the supervision of the Mission Department's Curacy Program. Each ordinand will serve the first two years of his ministry as curate to an experienced rector. The rector and curate are expected to cooperate with the guidelines and policies set forth by the Mission Department. The Diocese shares with the parish the expenses of the program.

World Mission Committee: The members of this committee are appointed by the Bishop and are charged to help our Diocese be more "mission minded," by stimulating our interest and involvement in mission work beyond the boundaries of our own Diocese. The committee assists the Bishop in coordinating our relationship with our Companion Dioceses in Northern Mexico and Northern Malawi.

FINANCE COMMITTEE:

The Finance Committee, consisting of appointed members of the Executive Council, is responsible to the Executive Council for oversight of the following procedures for the Diocese:

- Accounting
- Assessments
- Audits
- Budget
- Insurance
- Legal Concerns
- Property

All forms for loans, sale of property, purchase of property, etc., may be obtained from the Director of Business and Finance.

INSURANCE:

The Church Insurance Company also writes Property and Liability Insurance or any other insurance needed for church property at a considerable savings to the parish or mission.

Workman's Compensation Insurance must be obtained by each Parish or Mission who pays any salary or stipend to one or more employees. This insurance may be obtained from the Church Insurance Company.

Church Life Insurance Company, another company owned and operated by the Church Pension Fund, underwrites the Church Group Life & Comprehensive Medical Care Plan for clergy and lay employees. You may obtain a copy of the plan from the insurance secretary at the Diocesan Center.

WHERE TO SEND CHECKS:

All checks sent to the Diocese of Fort Worth should be made out to "Diocese of Fort Worth" and marked for Assessment, Bishop's Discretionary Fund, or whatever purpose you may indicate. Any checks so made out to the Diocese of Fort Worth will be credited to the proper purpose.

COMMUNITY MINISTRIES COMMISSION:

The Commission for Community Ministries is appointed by the Bishop from the membership of the Executive Council to deal with the Church's outreach to the community in which it lives.

The Commission's responsibilities are divided into the following areas of work:

1. Hospital and Nursing Home Ministries
2. Hispanic Ministries
3. Episcopal Relief and Development
4. Airport Ministry - DFW
5. Urban Ministries
6. AIDS Ministries
7. Drug and Alcohol Abuse
8. Counseling Center Ministries
9. Habitat for Humanity

DIOCESAN MINISTRIES COMMISSION:

The Diocesan Ministries Commission is appointed by the Bishop from the membership of the Executive Council and oversees the Church's work in the following categories:

1. College Chaplaincy Ministries
 - a. Saint Anselm - UT in Arlington
 - b. Saint Edward's - TCU in Fort Worth
 - c. Tarleton State University, Stephenville
 - d. Midwestern State, Wichita Falls
2. Camp Crucis
3. Lay Ministries
4. Churchwomen
5. Day Schools
6. Youth Commission
7. Worship Commission
8. Arts & Architecture Commission
9. Evangelism Commission
10. Stewardship Committee
11. Christian Education Commission
12. Episcopal Center for Renewal
13. Spiritual Life Committee
14. World Mission Committee

SECTION VIII:

GENERAL INFORMATION

“FORWARD IN MISSION” NEWS ITEMS should be sent to the Diocesan Office marked "For the Editor of Forward in Mission"

Twice a year a computer printout of each parish/mission mailing list will be sent for corrections. These should be corrected and returned as soon as possible. It would be helpful to receive any changes of address as soon as this information is received by the congregation.

The Editor of the *“Forward in Mission”* and the Bishop should both be on the mailing list of every parish and mission of the Diocese.

ITEMS AVAILABLE AT THE DIOCESAN CENTER from the Bishop's Secretary:

Bishop Iker's Official Portrait	8" x 10"	\$15.00
Lapel Pins (Diocesan shield)		\$ 5.00
Lay Reader Medallions		\$ 7.50
Diocesan Directories		no charge
The Apostolic Succession	11" x 17 "	\$ 5.00
Diocesan Shield (color print) in two sizes:	8" x 10"	\$ 5.00
	15" x 20 1/2"	\$ 5.00

MEETING FACILITIES:

Call the Canon to the Ordinary or his secretary to schedule use of the meeting facilities at the Diocesan Center. These facilities include a kitchen, chapel, conference room (40-50 people), and three smaller meeting rooms. A resource library for Christian Education and youth ministry is also housed at the Diocesan Center.

It is very important to check with the Canon to the Ordinary or his secretary in the scheduling of all activities, which should be on the Diocesan Calendar, whether or not they are to be held in the Diocesan Center. In this way, we can avoid unnecessary scheduling conflicts.

CAMP CRUCIS is a year-round camp, conference, and retreat center owned and operated by the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth under the direct supervision of a Camp Director. It has a Board of Managers that is responsible in turn to the Bishop. It offers a variety of retreats and conferences for all ages, as well as its summer camping sessions for young people.

The facilities can accommodate a maximum of three hundred and three (303) persons as follows: ten (10) in the Bishop Davies Lodge, sixteen (16) in Bishop Pope Lodge, thirty-six (36) in Bishop Mason Youth Lodge, two (2) in St. Leo's, nine (9) in the Friary, ten (10) in the Infirmary, with two hundred twenty (220) in the camper cabins which have heating and air conditioning.

BISHOP MASON RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTER is owned by the Diocese of Dallas to be used by the people of the parishes and missions of both the Diocese of Dallas and the Diocese of Fort Worth for the purpose of conducting retreats, conferences, workshops, and/or quiet days.

The facilities are excellent, and can accommodate up to fifty-eight (58) in overnight lodging, with forty-two (42) being housed in Bishop Garrett House, and sixteen (16) in Bishop Harte House.

BISHOP DAVIES CENTER is a non-profit corporation located at 2712 N. Hurstview in Hurst. The center is not simply a nursing facility; it is a retirement home, which provides its residents with comfort, security and peace of mind. The facility has 150 beds. Rates are variable and are dependent upon the selection of the level of care provided to the resident. Services offered are: Physical, occupational, and speech therapy, X-ray, EKG, lab, beauty/barber shop, social services and social activities.

COLUMBARIUM:

The Columbarium and Mausoleum of the Diocese of Dallas is located next to the Orand Memorial Chapel at the Bishop Mason Retreat and Conference Center at Flower Mound, Texas. This mausoleum is open from 9:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. for interment except on Sundays, Good Friday, Easter, July 4th, Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day.

Visitors are welcome to come visit, however it would be wise to call before making the trip to be sure that someone is there to welcome you. To make arrangements to visit, call: the Bishop Mason Center.